

gles resulting from the personal petulance and passions of rulers, has come to an end and has been succeeded by wars between people and nations. The great master of modern war was no doubt correct, and herein is where the danger lurks. The czar cannot individually plunge his nation into war; on the other hand he, as well as other European rulers, is too weak to restrain or deflect the popular tide, and in all probability will be drawn into the conflict against his individual convictions.

An effort on the part of Russia to seize the Danube means war with Austria. In such case the former would be the aggressor, and by virtue of the treaty with the Hapsburg monarchy, Germany must at once take the field. That would immediately bring the armies of France to the Rhine, whereupon Italy, true likewise to her treaty engagement, would spring upon the flank of the republic. The outcome of a conflagration started on the banks of the Danube would be terrific.

In view of such a prospect, the situation of Europe is truly interesting. There is the thorn of Alsace-Lorraine sticking in the side of the unforgiving and revengeful French; Italy still has some territory unredeemed; Denmark yet harbors a deep grudge against her truculent despoiler; even the peaceful Swedes long to free their former subjects, the Finns, from the tyrannical mastery of the Russians; the Spaniards would gladly profit by a European complication to regain Gibraltar; the Cretans, egged on by the Greeks, are resolved to throw off the galling Turkish yoke; Austria longs for Salonica; the Bulgarians are determined to be alike free from sultan and czar, while the public sentiment is strong on the Balkan peninsula for Balkan federation and independent nationality. All these slumbering passions and meditated schemes of aggression and revenge form an assurance that European peace, sooner or later, must be shattered.

The upheaval may come in a few months; the conditions seem ripe. It may be deferred for years; men in high places dread its precipitation. But even in the face of mighty strides for international arbitration which are being made in the relations of our own government, and which set the mark of progress for other nations, it appears inevitable that the great war cloud which hangs over Europe must burst in a storm of unparalleled fury upon the nations ere the star of peace may hope to shed forth its rays with any promise of permanency.

TITHE RESISTANCE IN WALES.

The dispatch from London which announces that "the Penrhyn district, North Wales, is in a state of anarchy," bears on its face evidence of gross exaggeration, the inspiration for which is revealed in the closing statement of the telegram that the home secretary does not send troops to enforce certain writs because "the Welsh members of parliament are anti-tithers and ardent liberals almost to a man."

The dispatch is in line with efforts in progress in Great Britain to bolster up the established church in Wales, which the Gladstonian party is disposed to break down in its temporal

control. The question is an important one to the Cambrian people, and for a long time they have been clamoring for the disestablishment of the Welsh church as a government institution. This ecclesiastical organization has many features objectionable to "chapel goers," or dissenters from the state religion, that which provokes the greatest opposition being the enforcement of the tithe law. Under this statute a parson of the state church can collect tithes from a person who holds no membership in the church, and can invoke the officers of the law to seize property for tithing.

It is this outrage upon justice and religious freedom that many of the people of Wales are opposed to. They do not believe that a parson of the Welsh church should be permitted to levy tithes upon a member of a dissenting church and seize that member's cow, horse or other property therefor. This attempt to collect tithes by distraint has been met with prompt resistance for many years in succession, and in the main the resistance has been effective.

But as to a state of anarchy existing, that is all rubbish. The true condition is that when a sheriff attempts under a civil process to take off some farmer's cow for the benefit of the parson, the farmer and his neighbors unite and tell the officer to keep his hands off and test the legality of the act. If the sheriff is foolish enough to attempt to use force, he is liable to get roughly handled. It was one of these affairs that caused the "riots and bloodshed" named in the dispatch as occurring two or three years ago. The "bloodshed" consisted of the gore that was spilled in several rough and tumble fights, in which no one was seriously injured, though several of the participants were bruised up considerably.

It is not to be wondered at that this resistance to the Welsh tithe collecting system attracts "little attention in London," or is "practically unnoticed in parliament." The reason for this is that leading and liberal minded statesmen sympathize with the opposition to the parsons. The latter have the letter of the law on their side, but were it not for the vote of the Anglican church in the British legislature the law would be repealed. This the tithe collectors know, and while in a few unappealable cases the recalcitrant Welshmen are fined, yet there is no attempt at prosecution in a manner that would bring the matter before the higher courts for adjudication, lest these should decide that collection of tithes from dissenters was an infringement of religious freedom and property rights, and thus the collectors would fail to get that which they now receive from many people who would rather pay than be engaged in the hubbub of resistance. The sentiment for the disestablishment of the Welsh church goes on steadily increasing, and this generation may see the end of enforced tithe collection. But the resistance to this collection is not anarchy or anything akin to it. To all the laws that are recognized by her majesty's government as truly binding these very Welshmen give unquestioned allegiance. In resisting a particular act they are but voicing the sentiment of all the various dissenting church members in Britain,

and usually keep within the peace regulations, which, in their administration at least, justify them in resisting an over-enthusiastic officer who exceeds the strict line of his duty.

AGAINST AMERICAN FLOUR.

There is probably no American miller or farmer so fond of a protective tariff as applied to imposts, that he would not favor a material tariff reduction on the part of foreign nations when our products come to be regarded by them as imports. For instance, the agrarian agitators in Germany have succeeded in putting an import of \$2.50 per barrel of 220 lbs on American flour—the result of which is the practical exclusion of this product from German markets. Nor is there any early prospect of a reduction in this rate, a fact which has led some of our diplomatic agents in that country to advise the sending of commercial representatives to the great ports of the Fatherland with a view to converting their leading men to a more liberal view of international equity and a juster appreciation of their own country's needs.

A curious feature in this connection is the fact that while this almost prohibitive impost exists as to flour, American wheat may be imported into Germany subject only to a duty of \$1.19 per 220 lbs. This is less than half the figure laid against the flour, and is clearly out of all proportion. But its purpose is not far to seek, and its injustice is apparent at a glance, looking at it from the German standpoint merely. The discrepancy cannot be explained in favor of the consumer, for he would just as soon buy the flour as the wheat. It cannot be in favor of the home producer, for what he raises in this line is originally wheat, not flour. It can only be in favor of the home miller, whose monopoly of the grinding even of imported cereals is thus preserved.

The proposition furnishes matter for discussion on both sides of the tariff question in America. The reformers may point out the favoritism to the comparatively few millers. The high protectionists may rejoinder that the blunder is in catering to the delusive cry for lower taxed or free raw materials.

DO NOT SMOKE.

To preach against vices is often as discouraging as to fight flies and mosquitoes. They will grow and multiply as long as favorable conditions exist. Witness for instance the habit of smoking in general and cigarette smoking in particular. This vice the whole medical profession has almost unanimously denounced as one of the most destructive in its results. The gentlemen of the pulpit have warned against it, and thousands who are victims of the poison have added their testimony to the ruin wrought in their nervous system. But, in spite of all this, smoking is still going on. One can hardly walk down the street a busy day without having to inhale a portion of soot, blown from the mouth of a smoker.